

1972

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Foreword

Between these covers lie feelings, the feelings of real people. Contained herein are hate, love, sorrow, happiness, frustration, pity and imagination--everyday feelings of our everyday life here at Mitchell.

We apologize for nothing written here, for that which is truly creative comes from inside a person. To write creatively is to write from your heart; it is not a copy of others.

With this in mind we hope you conceive a small portion of what has gone into this magazine, because if you can, then all our time and effort are well rewarded.

OUR OWN WORDS

Writings by Mitchell College Students

Compiled and edited by

Eta Alpha Lambda

Creative Writers' Fraternity

Statesville, N. C.

May, 1972

Editorial Board Paula Benfield
Gloretta Lanier
Clyde R. Slate, Jr.
Shirley Stout

Illustrations* Paula Benfield

Faculty consultants Miss Martha Linney
Mrs. Aileen FitzPatrick

*The illustration for "In Tomorrow All Alone" is adapted from Andrew Wyeth's painting Christina's World.

be reflected in specific situations and
concerns, as well as in shared historical, cultural, and
geographical contexts. The title "Ourselves" emphasizes
the shared and collective nature of the project.

While not a definitive position or argument, the
title "Ourselves" is intended to name a shared sense of
connection and shared responsibility for the well-being of
the world.

There is evidence that certain types of art can
have a profound impact on our ability to think
critically and creatively, and to find
common ground. This title is a call to action, to
encourage artists to use their skills and talents to
create art that can help us to see ourselves and
the world in a new light.

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Paula Benfield (PAB)	1-6
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IN TOMORROW ALL ALONE

As I sit here alone
And remember better times,
One memory stands out:
That first love of mine.

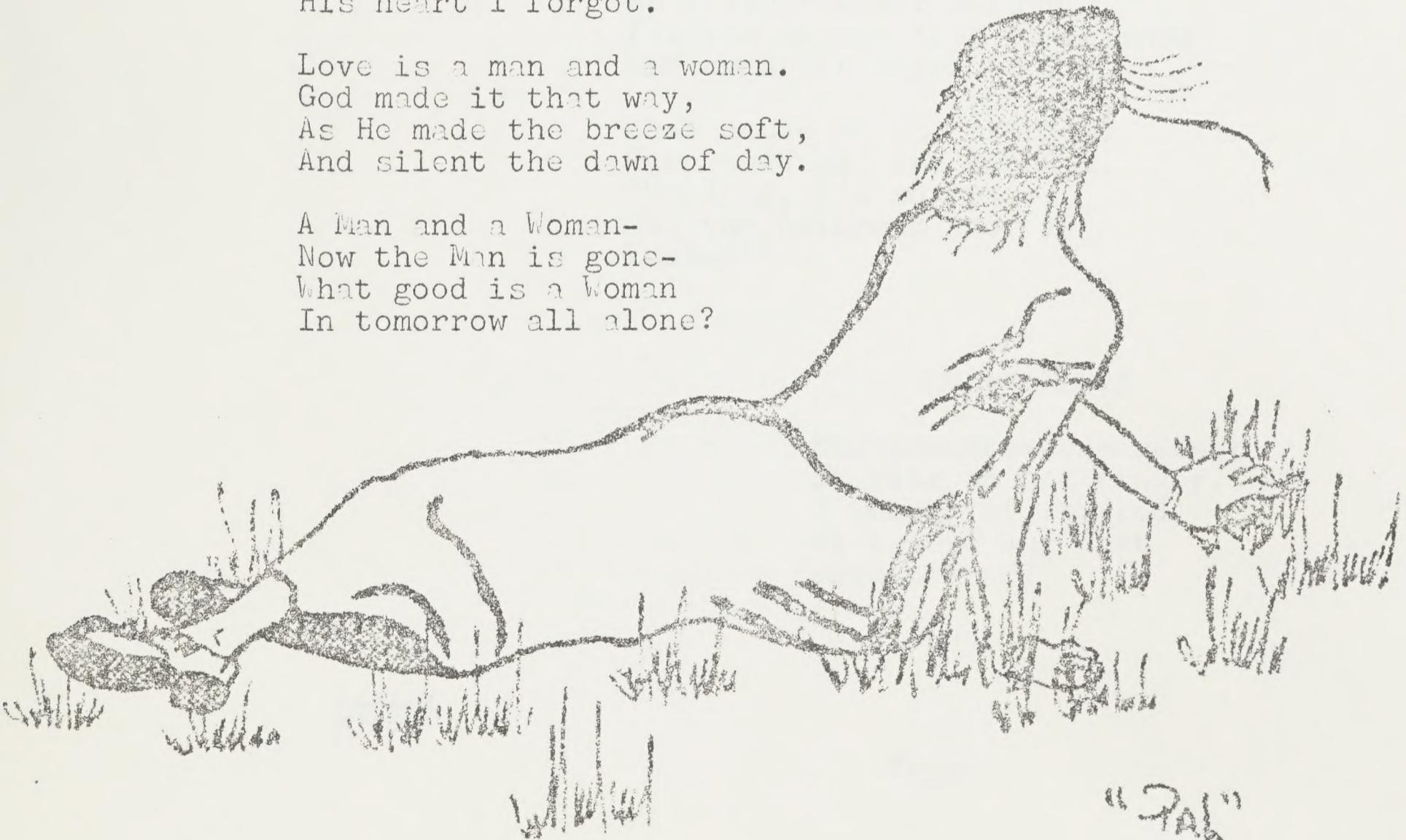
I had read it only in books,
And had seen it from afar,
Glittering in moonlit nights
And gleaming in the brightest star.

At first when I saw him
My young heart leaped,
For his glance caught mine
And his smile was sweet.

My love was for a man,
But my life was not,
And in my fear
His heart I forgot.

Love is a man and a woman.
God made it that way,
As He made the breeze soft,
And silent the dawn of day.

A Man and a Woman-
Now the Man is gone-
What good is a Woman
In tomorrow all alone?



"Pal"

SWEET NOTHINGS

Sweet nothings from all men
 Who desire to be your husbands,
 Mean nothing, young lover,
 For they come by the dozens.

THEY'VE GONE

They've gone now.
 Here I am
 Alone, all alone.
 With no cheese nor ham.

Starvation is rumbling
 And starting to roar.
 Maybe I'll die!
 No, I'll go to the store.

NO RETURN

Love was all around me
 As I awaited her return.
 Passion leaped then languished
 And my heart began to burn.

What could be the problem?
 Then suddenly she knocked.
 "Darling, I'm sorry,
 But the bathroom door is
 locked!"

ENGAGEMENTS

Engagements--engagements
 No ring on her finger.
 I wonder if it died,
 That love bug that
 stung her?



"Pab"



THIS MORNING WHEN I AWOKE

This morning when I awoke,
The dawn was fresh and new,
Soft was the early breeze,
Sweet was the morning dew.

This morning when I awoke,
The day was a new start
For a love, for a life,
A new venture of the heart.

I began by regretting
What had not yet been,
For now I know
Love won't come again.

This morning when I awoke,
I was yet asleep.
For the poppy fields of failure
Abound beneath my feet.

This morning when I awoke,
I lay without faith.
Morning is a new start.
I'm night. I'm too late.

--"FAB"

SWIFT, SILENT

Swift silent sprays
 Of wishful winter winds
 Have ceased their bitter battle
 And will never boow again.

Soft sweet sunshine
 Of warm whimsical ways
 Have captured all my sorrows
 And taken them far away.

Secret smiling sweeps
 Of happy hopeful hearts
 Have gathered in my saddened soul
 And tore my woe apart.

THE COOLNESS

The coolness clung to her
 As she lay there alone
 Thinking of her childhood
 And all free days gone.

The stillness surrounded her
 As she lay in no light
 But love warmed and brightened her
 On this her wedding night.

"PAB"

I'll Stand Here Quietly

I stand here quietly.
 What do you say
 When your love's been gone
 For too many yesterdays?

I can see him now,
 And I know he sees me.
 Maybe I should run to him!
 No, I'll stand here quietly.

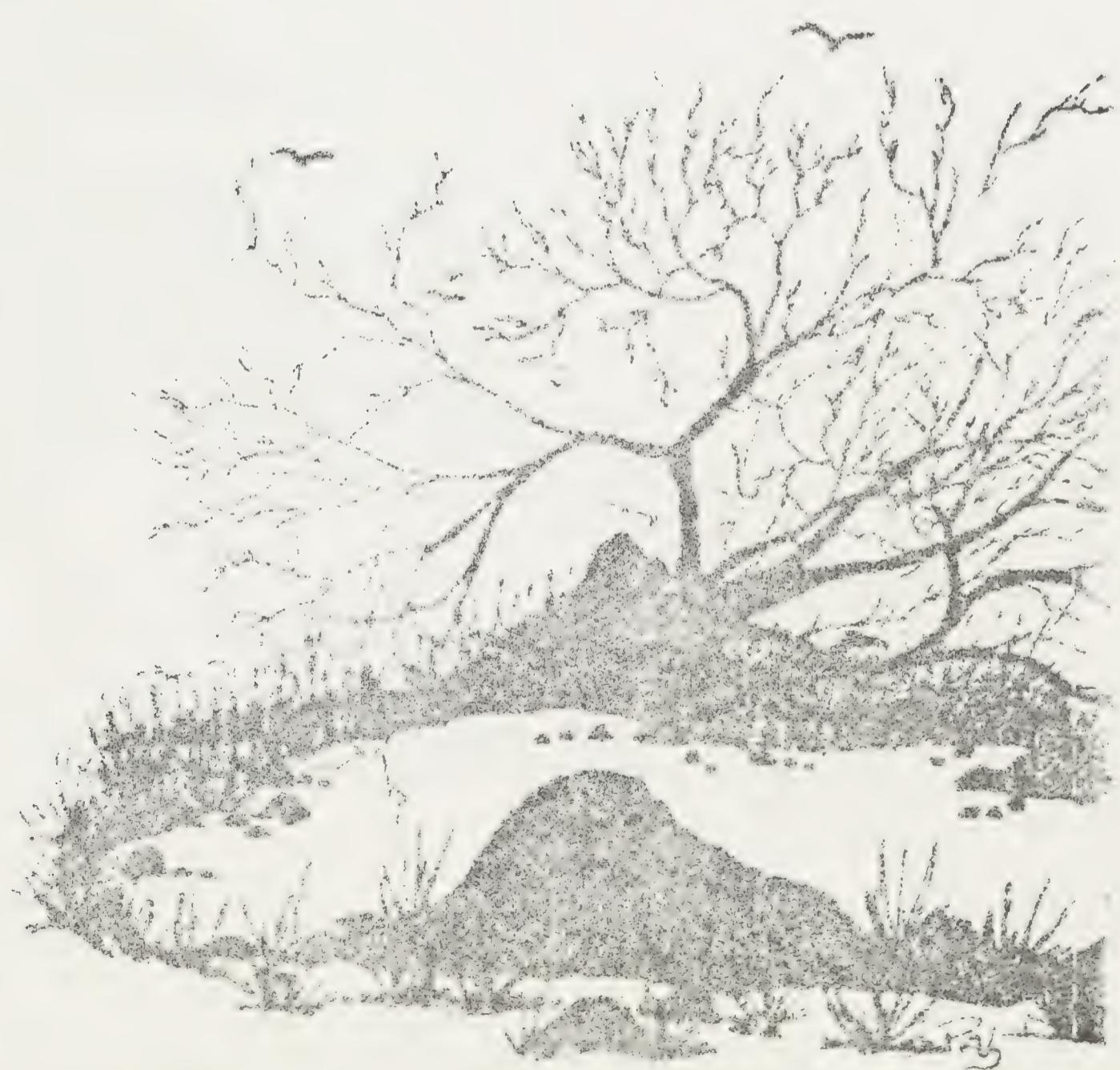
"PAB"

PRETTY WAS THE SKY,
A gentle sort of blue.
Soft was the meadow
When I made love to you.

Warm were the sun rays
Upon my shining brow,
Hot were your kisses--
I feel them even now.

Your hands were so gentle,
Your words were as song--
Sweetly spoken sonnets.
To me you then belonged.

--PAB



I OFTEN DARE

I often dare to speak
 With harshness and pain,
 But I never really meant it.
 Can I be your friend again?

I often speak my piece
 Yet I never say what I mean.
 I'm only confused with things
 That I've heard and seen.

I need time to think
 And find myself anew.
 Maybe then, sweet friend
 I can share again with you.

SWEET DAYS

Sweet days are gone.
 Soft breezes have blown.
 Blue skies are gray now
 And I am all alone.

Leave me, my darling.
 I'll go my way
 But not into tomorrow,
 Back to yesterday.

I'll travel those streets
 Where loneliness abides
 And sit among the willows
 And with them I'll cry.

Goodbye, sweet tomorrow.
 Goodbye to you my friend.
 I'm going back to yesterday
 And I won't be back again.

"PAB"

LOVE

It is the elusive thing,
 Like a bird with a broken wing,
 And though I will that it would stay
 I watch it heal,
 and fly away.

John Manning

JUST ANOTHER MAN

Don't put no fancy markers
Over my head when I go.
Don't put no fancy marker on my grave,
'Cause it's a long, weary journey
And the goin's kinda slow.
Don't put no fancy marker on my grave.

I hope the soil's loose
When they put me in the ground
I hope the soil's loose in that place.
Flowers of the Evening
Will gather and abound.
I hope the soil's loose in that place.

Ain't gonna Be no mourners
By my grave when I am due,
Ain't gonna be no mourners by my grave
'Cause I am just another man
And I am only passin' through.
Ain't gonna be no mourners by my grave.

--Lizard
(Published in Community Review)

I HEAR TELL

It's like riding a bicycle
Into an enormous pool.
First you're ascending
As though you'll fly right up to the stars
And embrace everyone.

But then you begin

going
down

Slowly

falling

To take your place within the Universe.

And when you splash

You're gently rolling through the azure void.

You stop in space,

And you know you're there,

To wait a little while

Before the return.

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--Lizard

A BLACK ORCHID

At night, when the clouds move slowly
 Across the land
 And the people dwell
 In the azure void of sleep,
You can hear them, over the hills,
 Sealing caskets
 In the pale moonlight.

No one, save demons of the forest,
 Knows the origin of these beings.
They come and go with the night
 Certain to return
 Sealing caskets
 In the pale moonlight.

There's the creak of the closing coffin
 Ever so faintly
 Finding the entrance of one's mind
 Trespassing within the ears
 That gently tapping sound
 Sealing caskets
 In the pale moonlight.

The time will come for us all
 To lie within the oblong box
 And gaze into the faces
Of those we heard at night
 Sealing caskets
 In the pale moonlight.

--Lizard

A Girl Once New: Revisited

Sitting in a lonely room
 Where faces have no names,
 Gazing at the clock once more
 To see it's still the same,
 And wondering about the times
 When you were here with me....
 But you had to go and walk
 Through the forest.

Those sunny days in pasture
 When we'd lie upon the ground,
 You'd look at me with velvet eyes
 And let your hair hang down.
 We were lost in one another's souls,
 Our spirits fancied free,
 And you said you'd never walk
 Through the forest.

Often now I see your face
 Float gently through my mind.
 I think about the day you left
 And what you hoped to find.
 Experience is wisdom;
 You had to go and see.
 And the jackals cry for more
 Through the forest.

--Lizard

IF

If man were God
 What would he have made the earth like?
 If man were God
 Where would you and I be?
 If man were God
 Could he reason with such power?
 If man were God
 He would destroy himself.

--Dennis Morrison

YOUR MADNESS, MY MADNESS

One man's madness
is another man's joy.

If your madness
gives you something
Your madness isn't wrong.

You
are
surely
not
alone.

BUT
if
your
madness
serves
no
purpose,
THEN it
surely isn't
good.

You may have your madness
And I mine.
My madness has a purpose.

One man's madness is his joy.

--Auburn Collins

The Gift Without a Package

Seeking God's Light
 Oh, what a task!
 Yes, so near but so far.
 Lift your arms skyward and ask.

Cry out loudly for God's gift.
 Surprise! The Messiah will come.

To be saved, oh what a thrill.
 The Lord sends the blood rushing
 And now you are Spirit filled.
 Give thanks to Him.

Carry your swords, young soldiers;
 Lucifer's out to do you in.

Praise God highly
 For this gracious gift.
 Smile with joy and kiss the world
 good-bye,
 For you've found eternity road.

--Rob Davis

?

For if I were to fulfill a life of love
 I'd offer you my heart, my heaven, my self,
 I'd give you my hand, my house, my home,
 I'd seek you, I'd warm you, I'd love you.
 For my love of thee is as great as life--
 But my life is incomplete without love from thee.

Do you understand my word, my thought, my message?

For if you were to fulfill a life of love
 Would you search for me with your heart?
 Would you look for me in absolute?
 Would you see me?
 For if your love for me were complete
 Would you take me the way I am
 Or the way I might be?

Do you understand me?

--Rob Davis

WHY NOT?

Only to ask,
Only to ask you
to spread your wings and fly
Only with me.

Only to ask,
Asking you to open your arms,
Taking me in--never letting me out.

Only to ask
That you open your mind
To the complete love I have
waiting for you.

Only to ask
That you fill your heart,
Fill with the happiness
I would like to provide.

Only to ask
That the joy you could bring to me
Would complete the empty half of my life.

Only to ask,
Only to ask that you will see through those
Who may offer only temporary love,
And know that at last
truth has confronted you.

Only to ask,
Only to ask, my love,
That you take the one who cares.

Only to ask,
Only that you come as you will,
Knowing I will take you as you are.

Only to ask
That if you call for me
Only then will I come.

Only to ask,
Only to ask,
Only to ask that you will see.

Only to ask,
Only to ask that you will ask yourself--
Why not?

--Rob Davis

CHAIR OF WOOD

Chair of wood,
what is your name?
And where you're from
how is the game?
Are there any deer left?
do the birds still sing sweet?
Or is there now a building, a car lot
or street?
Did you look over a pasture
the last day you stood?
Were there real live horses
or cattle chewing their cud?
Could you hear the babble
of a mountainside stream?
Or was the air so filthy
that the sun couldn't gleam?
Little chair in the corner
so silent and stern,
Did God tell you something
that mankind should learn?

--Patty Harwell

DO THE GARDENING LORD

I, as a nonuser of the heathern weed,
find lawn mowers to be pleasant.

I'm in love, you see, with one who fertilizes
the great sea of grain.

Thrashers are welcome.

But words in books bring the roll of eyes and
smirky laughs that say, "What do they know?"

Please God-

Let somebody know something and tell them.

The bad seeds are growing-

The weeds need hoeing.

LOVE is the burning eyes
when tears are many
And the night seems long.
Love is the burning heart
when forgiveness is found
And we grow strong.

SO BLUE

Blue skies reflect in
your blue eyes
reflected in my eyes
filled with blue.

Patty Harwell

LU and ME: MITCHELL '71

But we live on, in our cozy little
not-too-well-lighted room,
Lu and me, that is!
And we say, "No shit!" and "Damn it!"
and good stuff, like "Dear Robert."

And sometimes we write nasty-c-grams,
while others, we just sit and talk.
Then how about the hours around
two a.m. when everything is as funny as hell
—sophisticated, I guess.

Sometimes, which are most of the times,
not a quinstant, but most of the times
there is a pile of clothes somewhere
either on the stool,
in the bed,
or on a chair.

But we manage, Lu and me.

College life,
Good grief!
No one would ever believe it.
Alarm clocks not going off...
and raising the windows to cool down
in zero degree weather.

And then again ... there are the
"I can't wait to see Robert" and
"Wonder what the hell's Gary doing?"
times.

Just every once in a while, we get
a phone call ...
when the phone's not tied up
till 3 in the morning.

"What did Sallee do?"
and "You mean Pickett expects that?"
Well,
"Hell! ... Shit! ... Damn!"

Hair dryers blowing at 6 in the morning, and kicking shoe racks to open the closet door.

Sun-lamps that dry the skin, lost
books, receipts and pens.
A dirty bra, a knock on the door,
Secret sisters, panty raids
and more
Fire drills, ghosts up stairs, dust
all over and
tangles in the hair.

What could it be?
College life for
Lu and me!

--Patty Harwell

MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH
by David Millsaps

If life
goes on, where
does it go? Is it
a journey into time?
or a journey into
oneself?

What is life?
a look--
a touch--
a smell--
a beginning....

DEATH
is a subject
that should be
taken lightly,
especially if
you weigh
only 98 pounds.

47

SITTING WITH HIM - - - AND HIM LOOKING AT HER

I've once more
that sick, stupid feeling;
and in my chest
my heart pounds and
butterflies fly - - -
in my eyes - - - hate
mingles with my
tears and fear.
I have a lump in my throat
and it is hard to swallow - -

Ah - - - she writes on --
her legs (skinny) crossed and
a lock on her face
that shows that she sees us,
and feels proud and wants to
laugh, at me,
and smile at him.

My heart hurts - -
I feel weak and depressed.
Again I think of
him and her.
A maneuver she was; but it worked.
And I am afraid, every day,
that she is up to it again;
And he will go - - -
again - - -

--Patty Harwell

TOMORROW?

If there was a tomorrow
that really and truly came,
There would be nothing
else to hope for,
Nothing would be the same.

For tomorrow is just a saying,
a hope for every man,
A time for which we're living
to be able to live again.

Man can stop, look and say
tomorrow this will be,
but if plans for tomorrow
were kept, no man would be free.

--Sonny Slate

INNER CITY BLUES

It's dark in the city, but it's
 all lit up:
 Fires, shooting, and all that
 stuff.
 Panthers, Klums, on the ball
 everybody's having a free
 for all--
 Fuzz, pigs, everywhere.
 I wonder is there any
 body here who cares.

--Gloretta Lanier

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Here I am sitting and
 watching the day go by,
 Whethering what's happening
 outside;
 No one here to tell me
 what's happening.
 All I see is the strives going
 from head to toe.
 But one day the sun will
 set
 and let my life run out,
 Instead of the crowd
 passing me by.

--Gloretta Lanier

SOUL

Dark skin, nappy hair,
 Black power fist in the air,
 Climbing the ladder to the top;
 White society saying stop.
 Riots, demonstrations in the set,
 But the Black man will get
 there yet.

--Gloretta Lanier

STUDENT UNION BUILDING, 1972

There is this curious thing I do not
 understand;
 I suppose it relates to the species
 called man.
 For the answer I've searched but I
 cannot find,
 and the mystery of it leaves
 a hole in my mind.

There are times that I stand and stare
 at this nothingness
 this hole of air.
 For definition, to Webster I cling:
 "A hole is an opening through a thing."
 And so it remains, this container of useless
 space--
 Our very own hallowed, hollow place.

---John Manning

18 -- and Uncle Sam's

The wind blows cold upon my face
 as the bay doors are opened and I take
 my place.
 Smooth metal skin with nothing implied
 of the fiery hell it holds inside,
 it nestles there in its special place,
 as the wind blows cold upon my face.

Well-trained hands quickly do their tasks,
 While a well-trained mind never asks
 Who today is going to die?
 ---from this maiden of the sky?
 Jenny is her given name,
 and destruction is her deadly game.
 Time grows short in this maddening race,
 as the wind blows cold upon my face.

Two turns to the left and pull the pin,
 this Jenny missile is armed and in,
 all doors are closed, equipment clear.
 The pilot nods, the time is here.
 I watch him vanish in time and space,
 and the cold wind blows upon my face.

---John Manning



IF, when passing this sullen place
in the deep hours of the night,
one happens to glance that way
he would find a dim light ...
coming from within

the half-opened room.
A step closer ... he could see
the reflection of a lighted
candle
in the picture glass of some
young man
possibly a brother but
more likely not.

All would be still as his eyes
fell upon a sleeping figure
clutching a small pale blanket.

It would be her

asleep among all
her books ... possibly studying
many hours before ...
still with a pen in her
hand

and a half-finished letter
that would begin

"Hey Sweetheart."

but the ink has run and
the paper is damp ... as if
it had rained in the open window.

"Odd," he would think,
"I recall no raining tonight."

--Lu McLeod

AS night begins, the emptiness of the word
 lonely
 fills the small dimly lighted room
 only one white
 candle
 with a velvet flame illuminates
 this secret room and recalls
 sounds of love, not too far
 gone.

Cool winds, rainy nights, open windows
 they too are
 sounds of love, not too far
 gone.

Warm bodies, a sleepy embrace,
 the gentle caressing of one's hair
 this is the
 touch of love not too far
 gone.

I too remember this
 love not too far
 gone.

Then it begins to rain.

JUST BEFORE THE STORM

I know what it's like just
 before the storm -- I know
 the dark -- I know
 the still -- I know
 the quiet pain
 just before the storm.

But will I ever know the
 storm -- will I ever know
 the rain ...
 the wind ...
 the violence ...
 that comes with the storm.

No ... I think not ... I see
 a rainbow.

Lu McLeod

BEING a friend is like
 being an island,
 at a distance
 he is a desolate and
 unusual entity.

David Millsaps

A LOVELY WALK

As I walk those lonely halls of Mitchell,
 I find myself lost in her walls.
 The same, yesterday, today, tomorrow,
 She has now become a part of me.

When I have problems I walk those halls
 They seem to be the only ones listening.
 Then when I'm happy and full of joy,
 They also remain with me in thoughts.

I desire not a person to be more trustworthy,
 Nor desire someone more sincere.
 For in those walls I find myself,
 Along with the thoughts of who I might be.

I now look back into the past,
 My love for Mitchell I behold.
 Those walls of Mitchell have been my friends,
 My parents, my home, my future, and my past.

--David S. Freeman III

Questions??

At night when I look up at the stars,
 A million questions lie in my mind,
 Questions with no answers, of course--
 Questions no man can answer for me.

I asked the stars, why you, of all?
 And still the question lies unanswered.
 I wish it was me instead of you.
 Why you? I ask the stars each night.

--David S. Freeman III

FUNNY, isn't it, how you remember people?
Some by faces, some by feeling, and others
by their deeds.

And you wonder Why?
What exactly do you remember, what have
you forgotten?

--David Millsaps

CANDLES

Candles are unusual things.
They can bring back all the hopes and
memories of times past.
Memories of mountains, creeks,
being awakened by warm wet kisses or
the hope that in some small way you
have helped someone to find a portion
of himself through you...

Tomorrow I will wake up with a new day
facing me with all its glory.
But underneath this sunny facade it
will turn out like the days past,
filled with very human things, such as
war, hate, killing, starvation, loneliness,
hope, warmth, comfort, understanding,
compassion and most of all, you, Lord.

Wandering through the corridors of my mind
I am searching in every niche and cranny
trying to find out what, who and where I am.
Am I really a human being, or am I just a
shell of what I could be?
Will I always be confined within the
worlds of today, made up of pills, pot
and plastic?

--David Millsaps

REACHING out into the sky I grasped
a star and felt its warmth and loneliness.
Warm because of its security of being itself,
Lonely because it is one of millions of stars.
Such is a person's life--only one of millions,
but still one.

--David Millsaps

Realizing the people around you
is like being awed by
a beautiful sunset. It is a beauty
that will never be destroyed, and a beauty
that will never be recreated.

--David Millsaps



LONELINESS is eating at Woolworth's
 and looking out the window watching
 the people go by
 and looking for a face --
 not just any face, a face framed
 with brunette hair, wide-eyed,
 and beautiful.

to PAB

But where is she? Has she deserted
 me when I needed her most? Has
 she tried to forget me?
 If we meet, she says Hi! and
 I say hello; I ask how she is and
 she asks me; she says goodbye and I
 say goodbye....

If I could only see her
 smile, a real genuine smile

Loneliness is eating at Woolworth's

--David Millsaps

The little boy at the counter spinning his top doesn't really realize what he is spinning.

Sometimes it spins with its axis perfectly agitating, going round and round, only swaying when it slows to the point where it cannot sustain itself in a position where everything moves smoothly.

My life is a top; it reels back and forth, loses its balance, only for someone to stand it up again.

But a time will come when the top will lie on its side, a forgotten toy discarded in some snow-covered trash pile.

--David Millsaps

Signs, as plentiful as they are, ought to show some kind of information to people--that they're moving too fast or too slow, going the wrong way; that there's a gas station ahead.

But people discard these signs into the garbage dump that is located in everyone's mind.

They refuse to see the signs of life, the mystical happening of birth, the unfolding of another petal on a flower, the glorious moment when a plant first peeks into the sunlight.

These are the important signs, for these signs live and breathe and interact with each other; they are not just passive, inanimate objects cluttering up the scenery.

--David Millsaps

A FACE IS A MIRROR TO THE WORLD.

It can show all the love, hate, fear, and distrust of the times.

And as man proceeds down the road of life, his face changes.

At times it has more makeup than at others.

At times it is distorted out of shape. But slowly, the makeup wears off and the real face again shows through.

Why can't man realize the truth and hang on to the precious commodity and use it to spread love?

--David Millsaps

If I am what you say I am,
then I am no different from my ancestors.

If I am what you say I am,
then at least I do give a damn.

--David Millsaps

MUSING IN SEASON
by David Millsaps

As I think about my summer of this
year I find that I have left
much incomplete,
I have loved and lost,
been loved and forgotten.

* * * *

Walking through the flower garden
now dead because of the onslaught of
winter considering the beauty that
once was here.
Dreaming about the roses that once
bloomed and the marigolds that
smelled so fragrant.

I liked those times all warm and
full of hope, glorifying the presence
of the sun.
But those times are gone,
gone into the realm of
death now
all is withered and brown.

* * * *

SPRING is a most glorious awakening.
It is the bursting open of
the hope of earth,
The realization that life can be and is
quite beautiful
Spring bursting into the ringing glory of
Life.

* * * * *

HOPE is where there is life.
It can be minute, or it
can be massive.
But my hope comes in forms of
words and touches.
And you are my hope.

--David Millsaps

GIRLS

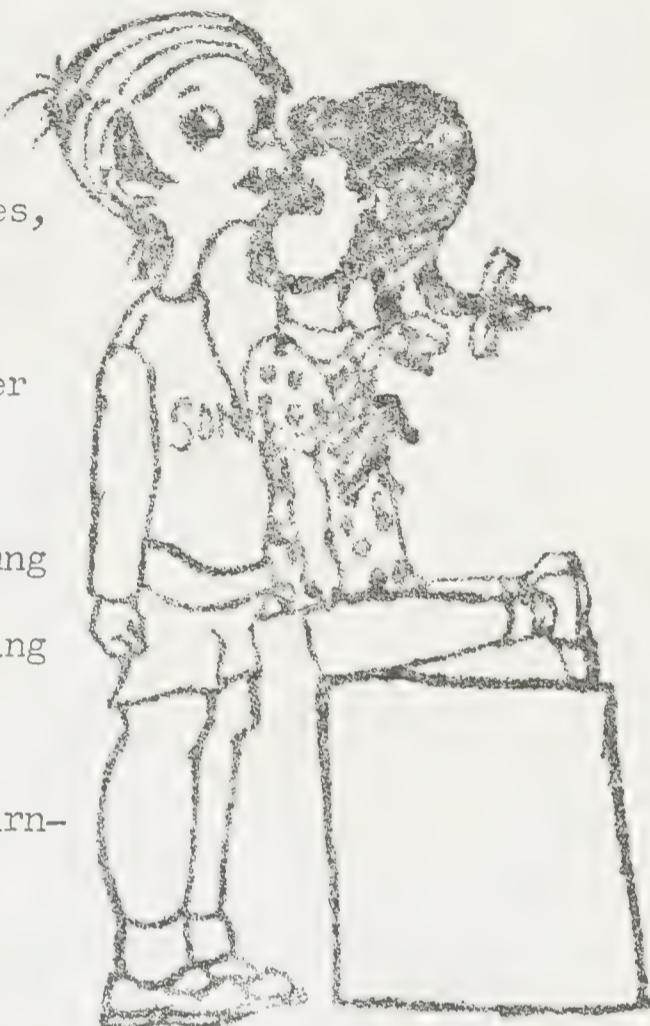
I really see nothing wrong with girls at all, but, of course, I was only ten and I didn't know what I was doing. It was kind of scary at first, sitting all alone, tongue-tied, nervous as heck, and, on top of that, it was night time. Well, now I welcome night time, but then I was a little boy, just passing the stage of calling girls cooties, and wondering whether anyone in my room would see me, or maybe her mom or even her dad would come.

But I suppose the one thing that flung through my mind was like a scientist trying to go about it step by step to see if I could analyze how to kiss. Well, just turning ten, well, I figured in my mind by seeing everyone else kiss, it was easy.

Well, my grandmother for instance--I've kissed her, and that wasn't too hard. I remember at six or seven years old I even thought it was fun. But then, of course, I had thought of it as a requirement for her cookies and cakes and suckers and gum she gave me whenever we came to visit her. But then again, the girl never gave me any cookies or cakes or suckers or gum. And anyway, I only met her an hour ago.

I was trying, but my body wouldn't get the message from my brain. The only thing really wrong was while I was worrying, she kissed me.

Like a person in chains, I was free once again. The knot dispersed from my throat, my heart slowed down, and I walked her home. Well, now actually, here's where the story begins.



"*TAKE*"

--Sonny Slate

THE END

And in the end, the beginning will come again.

When all our hate stops, love will come.

When all of our tears cover the ground, happiness will be reborn.

When our jealousy stops, admiration will prevail.

When we stop killing, life will roam once again.

When our greed stops, all men will be equal.

When in the end we look up, and we are gone, stillness will cover the earth; it will reach to all corners of our world, in the shape of a pure white dove, screaming, "Peace and good will to all the Earth, for man is gone."

---Sonny Slate

2001

His eyes caught the funny green object in the large glass case. He waited until his mother moved away with the common group, to another section; he walked up and pressed his nose against the cold glass and studied the mysterious object.

His small advanced mind searched back into all his memory of objects, which ranged, at the age of ten, from nuclear science to physics. He computed the size of this green thing; finally, after relating it to everything, he gave up.

This was interrupted by a slap on his head and a voice which was easily recognized as his mother's. "Where have you been?" Ignoring this, and being curious, he asked his mother what the weird green thing was. His mother, more advanced, would surely know. After inspecting the glass case, her perceptive eyes caught a card almost hidden from view. On the card was a five-letter definition of the green structure. She quickly read the card and calmly replied, "It's -- grass." She turned and grabbed his hand, and they returned to the group.

---Sonny Slate

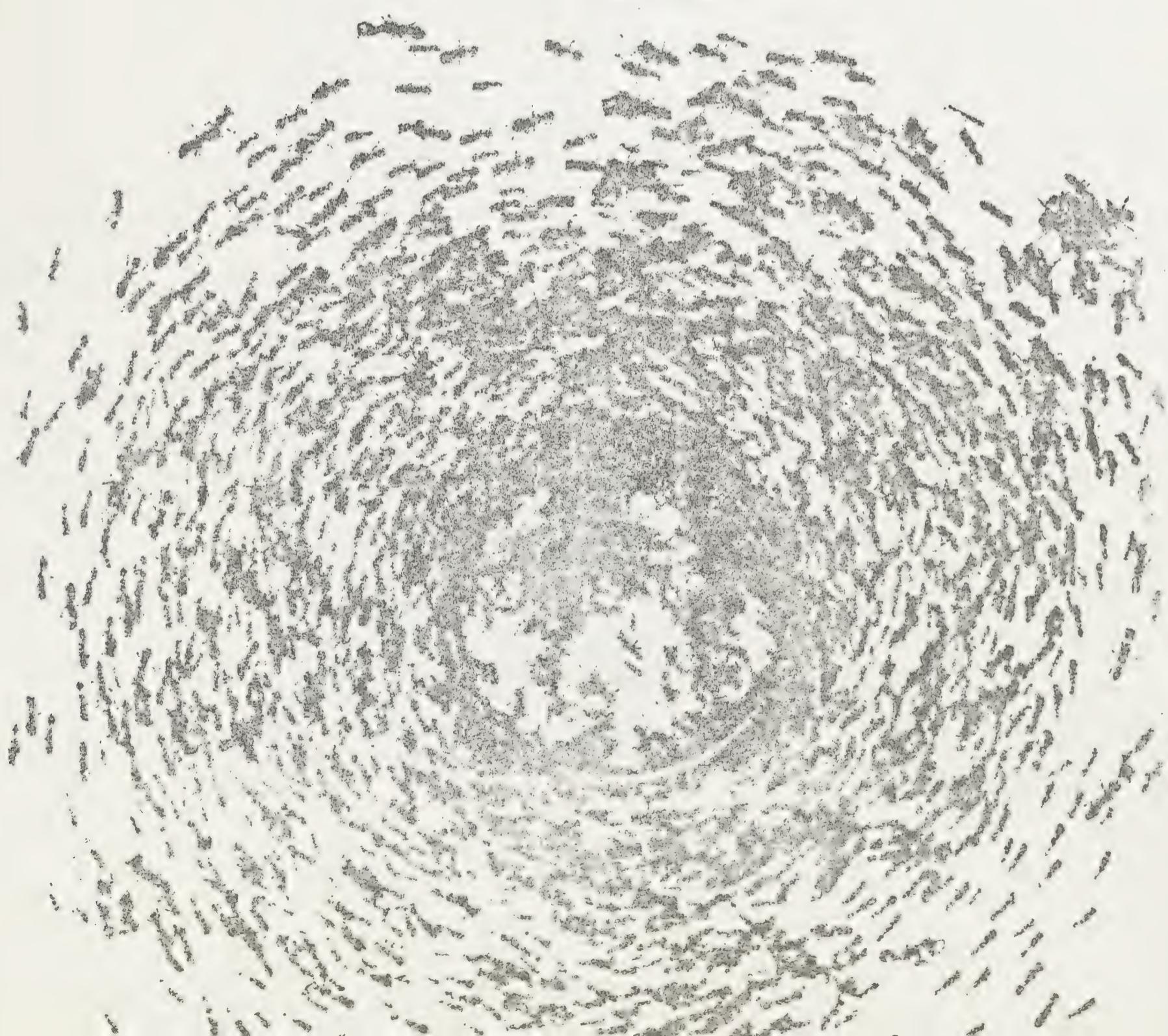
LIFE

Reborn and alive, I leave nothing
unnoticed or untouched. I want to be a
child again for one moment to run and fall
in open fields of green and yellow, not
caring.

I want to touch and take what I
please, but I cannot, because once I take
beauty like this--

it dies.

Sonny Slat



WINTERSONG

Tears fall in silken silence,
Like feathers from a newborn fowl.

Her eyes set toward what exists
beyond the rainbow of dreams.

But no empathy shall be felt for
the aged.

Autumn comes once again, maintaining
its unchanged cycle.

Death roots where soft golden hair
has once shone.

Tired and weary, already through
judgment,

She walks,
stops and decides

Spring will catch her.

She runs, and the
cold wind rushes across her
tear-stained face.

--Sonny Slate

SHE'S FREE

(for Wanda Drum)

Where time ends and the beginning
of all things is revealed,

there she walks, leaving
her footprint on all the minds
of mortal and immortal men.

Reborn and untouched, she
searches out her old life, to
change it and alter it any way
possible,

While her soul is constantly
ringing in our ears, "I'm free now."

--Sonny Slate



SORROW

Sorrow is like being empty. Having nothing inside and not caring that you are hollow.

It's like a living thing that follows you and looks sharply at you when you try to smile. Like maybe it's saying you have no right to smile. Something tragic has happened and you look sad when some great, bad something happens. You mustn't smile.

The one time you're really alone... when you're sad. People don't want it to rub off on them, o, you cry...alone.

Sonny Slate

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE

As I look at the well, covered
with leaves and lust,
The water now silent, like
a burning desire unknown to any man,

I feel that if I could kick away
the leaves, I could start
all over again,

My aging foot, heavy from
expectation, refuses to move.... I turn,

I run now, trying to erase from
my mind what has happened
and not wanting nor caring what
will happen.

I run faster--maybe time will
chase me;
then when time catches me
I'll be older and wiser.

I know that as I walk along
this road
I will never again pass the
Crossroads, dusty, cold, marked
"Yesterday."

--Sonny Slate

AUTUMN

The lights still shine along
this street.

Couples pass by and look.
The leaves, dying, fall from
the bare trees.

The cold wind stings as it
rushes over the dying ice from
another day; the ice flowing
under my shoes even passes
me by.

I walk where I used to
run as a child, a child who
owned this enclosure of fresh-
ness and beauty, which has
turned life's table of scenes--
now I'm a prisoner, a prisoner
until she returns.

--Sonny Slate

Ground Zero

As I sit in lonesome solitude awaiting the final moment, I begin to go over my life and try to establish just what it has meant to me. So many days I've spent in this lousy jail with the stench of waste growing worse all along. Damn this place! Iron bars surround me, and I feel like an animal put here for people to laugh at and throw popcorn to.

If only I hadn't pulled the trigger that second time! That stupid priest or whatever is in there reading some crap out of that book. Who needs it? My time's come anyway.

* * * * *

The arms of the chair are cold as ice--or is it just my skin? What was it that priest said about eternal life? Oh, what the hell! Well, not much longer now. Five ... four ... three ... two ... one ... zero! OH, GOD!!!

Bright lights flash everywhere. Now everything is dark. I'm in a long hall. There's a table before me. The book the priest was reading is lying on it. I reach for it --but it vanishes. I look up and see a scarlet curtain falling everywhere. Its touch is ghastly! It looks and feels as if the soul and blood of the man I murdered had been mixed together into one enormous, pulsating mass. From nowhere, yet from everywhere, there comes a light that exceeds all light. The final judgment is here at last. I stand, humble, in the presence of the Almighty Father. So, He really is real. I look up into His gentle face and see tears glistening in His eyes. He shakes His head and sadly murmurs, "My son, my son," as a father would to his only son that was going away. A tear falls, and I know there will never be any happiness for me.

* * * * *

Suddenly, I am falling like a rock dislodged from its place on a lofty cliff. As I fall, my soul begins to surge inside me. I hit bottom. A hideous laugh echoes in my ears
* * *

--Sam



MAINLINER

"PAI"

The wind blew years by like clouds;
Trees blossomed and died, but all for what?
Day after day the snow came and fell lightly
on our minds.
One day the snow ceased to fall
And dreams became a lost hope.

Hope for what?

More snow to warm the years?
And it came--drifting slowly--pulling
my mind into the vastness of an
empty world. Hope died--no more
tears--nothing.

One must yield sometime to the snow which
fogs the mind

And grows deeper...deeper...
and deeper still....

Lie down oh weary one and rest.

Sam

HANDS -- a smile -- drifting canoes -- the sound of waves at night -- that certain look -- touching -- snow -- All of these and more remind me of you -- of us.

I may have spoken these words before, but if I have the repetition is priceless.

These memories aren't locked in the past.

They lie in an open doorway leading to the very center of our souls.

The daybreak of our lives is past. The sun has already begun to shine brightly on you and on me. The morning hurries on leaving a golden trail behind,

Help me to catch a moment -- to hold on to it and not let it escape -- to stretch the feeling of love into eternity. Let me love and be loved that I might truly live -- for what is life without love?

My life without your love would be cold and empty; lacking the sunlight and warmth of your arms -- the special need I have for your nearness.

HOLD me in the morning hours when the sun breathes life over the land and I will kiss the sleep from your eyes and love you.

--Sam

THE CALL

Come away with us;
We know where there is life.
No more fear and no more hate,
Only happiness.

Follow the scarlet road to lands of flowers and birds.
Float among the stars with realities of love.

Yes,
Come to where there is life.
Come away.

--Sam

WHY is love so unkind?
 How is it fair for love to turn to shadows
 what was once sunshine?
 The love that brought me happiness and
 made each day worth living is gone.
 This same love touched my very soul
 with caresses and kisses as warm
 as a summer's day.
 How can anything so beautiful be so ugly?
 So ugly that it brings oceans of tears
 and such sadness.

Remember the day your hands first touched
 And he reached out with warm arms to
 shelter you from the storm.
 How could you forget the night the snow came
 And you were all alone. Together.
 The fireplace.
 And what of the day he gently cupped your
 face in his hands and whispered,
 "I love you,"
 his breath slowly rustling your hair.

But try not to remember the day he said
 goodbye and left you to cry
 Alone.

---Sam

ONE DAY

Tumbleweeds roll around the streets,
 An unhinged door creaks in the breeze,
 Rats scamper across deserted bars
 and through empty windows--
 Windows that look across a bay to
 a cracked and broken statue.
 I wonder what it was?
 Now it is only a remaining symbol
 of a foolish nation, long ago,
 that gained and retained power until
 one day
 There were no more people.
 Only the rats, the tumbleweeds, and the
 winds
 Remain.

---Sam

I MYSELF

I myself am that indeed,
 the person I want to be.
 No matter what other men may say
 I'll still be me.

If more people could take the stand
 that, I am me,
 and accept it,
 they could better understand
 their fellow man.

What's in this world for me
 I still do ~~not~~ know,
 but whatever it shall be
 I'll still be me.

My life is one big question
 to be answered by only me.
 Though I may never find the answer
 I'll still be me.

The strife, turmoil, and selfishness
 that goes on around me every day
 doesn't have to include me,
 for I do have the power to be me.

I am me
 Whether I like it or not,
 and in this world of turmoil
 I'll still be me.

—Scott Yancey

AS I SIT HERE contemplating
 the past I question myself:
 What exactly have I done for
 the future? Have I put myself
 far enough behind so that others
 will be more important? And
 have I been my brother's brother?
 loving him more than myself?
 Can ~~anyone~~ really answer these
 questions? Who
 is what
 where
 and why?

—David Millsaps

THE THRESHOLD OF FREEDOM

I'll be standing on the threshold
of all freedom;

Just you wait, some day they'll
see

When I cross the final mountain

I'll be as high as man can
be.

When there's no longer heartbreak

And the last hearts are
burned and sacked,

I'll pick up what's left of mine,
and without looking back,

I'll find it out there some-
where,
amid a generation lost in space,
in a common, everyday object,
in this time and age.

I'll rest my limbs from trying
to reach
the endless lengths of time.

Then I'll clasp throughout
eternity

All known words that rhyme.

Without reason for existence, no
sorrow, anger nor spite,
Finally seated at a wooden desk,
with pencil and paper,

I'll write.

--Sonny Slate

7/10/83

